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high flyers, and anchors are disconnected; and

(2) Any other method of stowage authorized in writing by the Regional Administrator and subsequently published in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

Strategic stock means a marine mammal stock:

(1) For which the level of direct human-caused mortality exceeds the potential biological removal level;

(2) Which, based on the best available scientific information, is declining and is likely to be listed as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 within the foreseeable future;

(3) Which is listed as a threatened species or endangered species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973; or

(4) Which is designated as depleted under the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended.

Sunrise means the time of sunrise as determined for the date and location in The Nautical Almanac, prepared by the U.S. Naval Observatory.

Sunset means the time of sunset as determined for the date and location in The Nautical Almanac, prepared by the U.S. Naval Observatory.

Take Reduction Plan means a plan developed to reduce the incidental mortality and serious injury of marine mammals during commercial fishing operations in accordance with section 118 of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended.

Take Reduction Team means a team established to recommend methods of reducing the incidental mortality and serious injury of marine mammals due to commercial fishing operations, in accordance with section 118 of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended.

Tended gear or tend means fishing gear that is physically attached to a vessel in a way that is capable of harvesting fish, or to fish with gear attached to the vessel.

Tie-down refers to twine used between the floatline and the lead line as a way to create a pocket or bag of netting to trap fish alive.

Tie loops means the loops on a gillnet panel used to connect net panels to the buoy line, groundline, bridle or each other.

Trap/Pot means any structure or other device, other than a net or longline, that is placed, or designed to be placed, on the ocean bottom and is designed for or is capable of, catching species including but not limited to lobster, crab (red, Jonah, rock, and blue), hagfish, finfish (black sea bass, scup, tautog, cod, haddock, pollock, redfish (ocean perch), and white hake), conch/whelk, and shrimp.

Trap/pot trawl means two or more trap/pots attached to a single groundline.

Up and down line means the line that connects the float-line and lead-line at the end of each gillnet net panel.

U.S. waters means both state and Federal waters to the outer boundaries of the U.S. exclusive economic zone along the east coast of the United States from the Canadian/U.S. border southward to a line extending eastward from the southernmost tip of Florida on the Florida shore.

Vessel owner or operator means the owner or operator of:

(1) A fishing vessel that engages in a commercial fishing operation; or

(2) Fixed or other commercial fishing gear that is used in a nonvessel fishery.

Vessel of the United States has the same meaning as in section 3 of the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1802).

Weak link means a breakable component of gear that will part when subject to a certain tension load.

[60 FR 45100, Aug. 30, 1995, as amended at 62 FR 39183, July 22, 1997; 63 FR 66487, Dec. 2, 1998; 64 FR 7551, Feb. 16, 1999; 64 FR 9086, Feb. 24, 1999; 65 FR 80377, Dec. 21, 2000; 67 FR 1141, Jan. 9, 2002; 67 FR 1313, Jan. 10, 2002; 69 FR 6584, Feb. 11, 2004; 69 FR 43345, July 20, 2004; 71 FR 24796, Apr. 26, 2006; 72 FR 34642, June 25, 2007; 72 FR 57180, Oct. 5, 2007; 73 FR 51241, Oct. 2, 2008; 75 FR 7396, Feb. 19, 2010]

§ 229.3 Prohibitions.

(a) It is prohibited to take any marine mammal incidental to commercial fishing operations except as otherwise provided in part 216 of this chapter or in this part 229.

(b) It is prohibited to assault, harm, harass (including sexually harass), oppose, impede, intimidate, impair, or in any way influence or interfere with an observer, or attempt the same. This prohibition includes, but is not limited

to, any action that interferes with an observer's responsibilities, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

(c) It is prohibited to provide false information when registering for an Authorization Certificate, applying for renewal of the Authorization Certificate, reporting the injury or mortality of any marine mammal, or providing information to any observer.

(d) It is prohibited to tamper with or destroy observer equipment in any way.

(e) It is prohibited to retain any marine mammal incidentally taken in commercial fishing operations unless authorized by NMFS personnel, by designated contractors or an official observer, or by a scientific research permit that is in the possession of the vessel operator.

(f) It is prohibited to intentionally lethally take any marine mammal in the course of commercial fishing operations unless imminent necessary in self-defense or to save the life of a person in immediate danger, and such taking is reported in accordance with the requirements of § 229.6.

(g) It is prohibited to violate any regulation in this part or any provision of section 118 of the Act.

(h) It is prohibited to fish with or possess trap/pot gear in the areas and during the times specified in § 229.32 (c)(2) through (c)(9) unless the trap/pot gear complies with the marking requirements, closures, modifications, and restrictions specified in § 229.32(b)(2)(ii), (b)(2)(iii), and (c)(1) through (c)(9), or unless the gear is stowed as specified in § 229.2.

(i) It is prohibited to fish with or possess anchored gillnet gear in the areas and during the times specified in § 229.32(d)(2) through (d)(7) unless that gillnet gear complies with the marking requirements, closures, modifications, and restrictions specified in § 229.32(b)(2)(ii), (b)(2)(iii), and (d)(1) through (d)(7), or unless the gear is stowed as specified in § 229.2.

(j) It is prohibited to fish with or possess drift gillnet gear in the areas and during the times specified in § 229.32(e)(1) through (e)(6) unless the drift gillnet gear complies with the marking requirements, closures, modi-

fications, and restrictions specified in § 229.32(b)(2)(ii), (b)(2)(iii), and (e)(1) through (e)(6), or unless the gear is stowed as specified in § 229.2.

(k) It is prohibited to fish with or possess gillnet gear in the areas and during the times specified in § 229.32(f)(1) and (g)(1) unless the gillnet gear complies with the marking requirements, closures, modifications, and restrictions specified in § 229.32(b)(2)(ii), (b)(2)(iii), (f)(2)(ii), (f)(2)(iv), (f)(2)(v), and (g)(3), or for (g)(3) unless the gear is stowed as specified in § 229.2.

(l) It is prohibited to fish with or possess shark gillnet gear (i.e. gillnet gear for shark with webbing of 5 inches (12.7 cm) or greater stretched mesh) in the areas and during the times specified in § 229.32(f)(1), (g)(1) and (h)(1) unless the gear complies with the marking requirements, closures, modifications, and restrictions specified in § 229.32(b)(2)(i), (b)(2)(iii), (f)(2)(ii), (f)(2)(iii), (f)(2)(v), (g)(2), and (h)(2), or for the gear marking requirements for (h)(2) unless the gear is stowed as specified in § 229.2.

(m) It is prohibited to fish with, set, haul back, possess on board a vessel unless stowed in accordance with § 229.2, or fail to remove sink gillnet gear or gillnet gear capable of catching multispecies from the areas and for the times specified in § 229.33(a)(1), (a)(3), (a)(6), and (a)(8). This prohibition also applies to areas where pingers are required, unless the vessel owner or operator complies with the pinger provisions specified in § 229.33 (a)(2) through (a)(5) and (a)(7). This prohibition does not apply to vessels fishing with a single pelagic gillnet (as described and used as set forth in § 648.81(f)(2)(ii) of this title).

(n) It is prohibited to fish with, set, haul back, possess on board a vessel unless stowed in accordance with § 229.2, or fail to remove gillnet gear from the areas and for the times as specified in § 229.34 (b)(1)(i), (b)(2)(i), (b)(3)(i), or (b)(4)(i).

(o) It is prohibited to fish with, set, haul back, possess on board a vessel unless stowed in accordance with § 229.2, or fail to remove any large mesh or small mesh gillnet gear from the areas and for the times specified in

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§ 229.34(b) unless the gear complies with the specified gear restrictions set forth in the provisions of paragraphs (b)(1)(ii) or (iii), (b)(2)(ii) or (iii), (b)(3)(ii) or (iii), or (b)(4)(ii) or (iii) of § 229.34.

(p) It is prohibited to fish with, set, haul back, possess on board a vessel unless stowed in accordance with § 229.2, or fail to remove sink gillnet gear or gillnet gear capable of catching multispecies in areas where pingers are required, as specified under § 229.33 (a)(2) through (a)(5) and (a)(7), unless the operator on board the vessel during fishing operations possesses and retains on board the vessel a valid pinger training authorization issued by NMFS as specified under § 229.33(c).

(q)–(r) [Reserved]

(s) It is prohibited to fish with, or possess on board a vessel unless stowed, or fail to remove, any gillnet gear from the areas specified in § 229.35(c) unless the gear complies with the specified restrictions set forth in § 229.35(d).

(t) It is prohibited to deploy or fish with pelagic longline gear in the Mid-Atlantic Bight unless the vessel:

(1) Complies with the placard posting requirement specified in § 229.36(c); and

(2) Complies with the gear restrictions specified in § 229.36(e).

(u) It is prohibited to deploy or fish with pelagic longline gear in the Cape Hatteras Special Research Area unless the vessel is in compliance with the observer and research requirements specified in § 229.36(d).

[60 FR 45100, Aug. 30, 1995, as amended at 62 FR 39184, July 22, 1997; 63 FR 66487, Dec. 2, 1998; 64 FR 7552, Feb. 16, 1999; 64 FR 9086, Feb. 24, 1999; 65 FR 80377, Dec. 21, 2000; 67 FR 1313, Jan. 10, 2002; 67 FR 59477, Sept. 23, 2002; 71 FR 24796, Apr. 26, 2006; 72 FR 57180, Oct. 5, 2007; 74 FR 23357, May 19, 2009; 75 FR 7396, Feb. 19, 2010]

§ 229.4 Requirements for Category I and II fisheries.

(a) *General.* (1) For a vessel owner or crew members to lawfully incidentally take marine mammals in the course of a commercial fishing operation in a Category I or II fishery, the owner or authorized representative of a fishing vessel or nonvessel fishing gear must have in possession a valid Certificate of Authorization. The owner of a fishing

vessel or nonvessel fishing gear is responsible for obtaining a Certificate of Authorization.

(2) The granting and administration of Authorization Certificates under this part will be integrated and coordinated with existing fishery license, registration, or permit systems and related programs wherever possible. These programs may include, but are not limited to, state or interjurisdictional fisheries programs. If the administration of Authorization Certificates is integrated into a program, NMFS will publish a notice in the FEDERAL REGISTER announcing the integrated program and summarizing how an owner or authorized representative of a fishing vessel or non-fishing gear may register under that program or how registration will be achieved if no action is required on the part of the affected fisher. NMFS will make additional efforts to contact participants in the affected fishery via other appropriate means of notification.

(b) *Registration.* (1) The owner of a vessel, or for nonvessel gear fisheries, the owner of gear, who participates in a Category I or II fishery is required to be registered for a Certificate of Authorization.

(2) Unless a notice is published in the FEDERAL REGISTER announcing an integrated registration program, the owner of a vessel, or for nonvessel fishery, the owner of the gear must register for and receive an Authorization Certificate. To register, owners must submit the following information using the format specified by NMFS:

(i) Name, address, and phone number of owner.

(ii) Name, address, and phone number of operator, if different from owner, unless the name of the operator is not known or has not been established at the time the registration is submitted.

(iii) For a vessel fishery, vessel name, length, home port; U.S. Coast Guard documentation number or state registration number, and if applicable; state commercial vessel license number and for a nonvessel fishery, a description of the gear and state commercial license number, if applicable.

(iv) A list of all Category I and II fisheries in which the fisher may actively engage during the calendar year.